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4701 WILLARD AVENUE, CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815 (301) 656-4068

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PROGRAM NBC Nightly News STATION WRC-TV
NBC Network

DATE December 2, 1986 7:00 P.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT David Jacobsen Comments on Death of William Buckley

TOM BROKAW: It is believed that the kidnapping of William Buckley triggered the U.S. arms dealing with Iran because of fears that Buckley's CIA secrets might be disclosed during captivity.

In an interview with Connie Chung for the NBC News program 1986, the former hostage David Jacobsen talked of Buckley and his own captivity.

DAVID JACOBSEN: I was blindfolded, chained hand-and-foot to the ground, to the floor, sleeping on a pad on the floor, and being dressed only in my underwear. And in another area in that room there were two other prisoners that I could not see because of my blindfolding and because of some temporary partitions that had been placed. But I know that, from deduction, one was Terry Anderson and the other was William Buckley.

BROKAW: Jacobsen believes that Buckley died of medical problems in June of last year, not in October, when terrorists claim they executed him. And Jacobsen's description of Buckley's condition was consistent with reports that he had been tortured.

JACOBSEN: He was delirious. He was regurgitating. He obviously was running a very high fever. And the guards came to me, because I was a hospital director, and said, "What can we do?"

And I said, "You better take him to see -- get him to a hospital or get a doctor to him."

They said, "We can't do that."

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CONNIE CHUNG: You were never brought in to see him or to treat him.

JACOBSEN: Oh, no. I could not see him. No, no. We were never permitted, at that time, to see one another. We were blindfolded.

And so, I firmly believe that William died in the evening of June 3rd.

CHUNG: How do you know that William Buckley died?

JACOBSEN: There was just a long, long silence. And when you're in a small room -- and there are certain noises that are associated with death.

CHUNG: But you don't believe he died of a bullet wound.

JACOBSEN: No. No, I don't.

BROKAW: Connie Chung's full interview with David Jacobsen can be seen on the NBC News program 1986 tonight.